

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 116Z

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SP

SUBJ: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC LEADER SILVA'S MEETING WITH SENATOR PELL

SUMMARY: UDE LEADER SILVA MUNOZ TOLD SENATOR PELL THAT, ALTHOUGH ARIAS IS LIKELY TO BE REPLACED BEFORE SUMMER, SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED REFORMS WILL BE MET DESPITE OBSTRUCTIONISM FROM COMMUNISTS. UDE WILL HOLD CONGRESS FEB 27 CONSTITUTING ITSELF AS POLITICAL PARTY. MEANWHILE, TALKS CONTINUE WITH "EQUIPO" OF FIVE OPPOSITION CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTIES ON PROBLEM OF UNITY. SENATOR PELL TOLD SIVLA THAT SENATE RATIFICATION OF BILATERAL TREATY WOULD BE INFLUENCED BY COURSE OF POLITICAL REFORMS IN SPAIN. END SUMMARY

1. FORMER PUBLIC WORKERS MINISTER AND PRESENT LEADER OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATION, "UNION DEMOCRATICA ESPANOLA (UDE)", SILVA MUNOZ, LUNCED AT THE RESIDENCE WITH AMBASSADOR AND SENATOR PELL FEB 12. SILVA GAVE A POLITICAL BRIEFING UNDER THE FOLLOWING HEADINGS.

2. SCHEDULE OF REFORMS. MAJOR POLITICAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL

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CHANGES WOULD BEGIN WITH LEGAL CHANGES ALLOWING FOR FREE

ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION WHICH WOULD ENABLE POLITICAL PARTIES TO ORGANIZE. THE PROMULGATION OF A NEW ELECTORAL LAW WOULD FOLLOW. CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS PREPARED BY THE RECENTLY ESTABLISHED GOVT/NATIONAL COUNCIL COMMISSION WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE PEOPLE BY REFERENDUM PROBABLY IN JULY. MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ARE SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER. NATIONAL ELECTIONS ON THE BASIS OF DIRECT, UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE FOR A LOWER CHAMBER IN A NEW BICAMERAL SYSTEM WOULD BE HELD IN APRIL OR MAY, 1977.

3. SUBSTANCE OF REFORMS: BICAMERAL SYSTEM WILL HAVE UPPER HOUSE ELECTED AND DESIGNATED ALONG PRESENT CORPORATIVE LINES, PERHAPS WITHOUT FAMILY SECTOR. ASKED ABOUT NEED FOR RETENTION OF CORPORATIVE STRUCTURE, SILVA REPLIED THAT THIS WAS ONLY REALISTIC WAY TO OBTAIN ACCEPTANCE OF LOWER HOUSE ELECTED DIRECTLY BY UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE. THE COUNCIL OF THE REALM, DESCRIBED BY SILVA AS THE APEX OF THE CORTES, WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE MODIFIED WITH RESPECT TO ITS PRESENT FUNCTIONS, BUT ITS MEMBERSHIP WOULD HAVE TO BE CHANGED TO REFLECT REAL POLITICAL COMPLEXION IN LOWER HOUSE.

4. COMMUNISTS ARE MAJOR OBSTACLE. SILVA DESCRIBED THREE DIFFERENT SOURCES OF COMMUNIST STRENGTH AS POSING GREATEST OBSTACLE TO GOVT'S REFORM PLANS: (A) PCE, (B) UNAVOWED COMMUNISTS INFILTRATED IN MEDIA AND OTHER AREAS, AND (C) COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IN LABOR MOVEMENT. GOVT HAS MAJOR TASK IN TRYING TO CONVERT EXISTING SYNDICAL STRUCTURE FROM WITHIN TO PROVIDE FOR GENUINE WORKER REPRESENTATION WITHOUT HAVING COMMUNISTS OBTAIN CONTROL. ACCORDING TO SILVA, SEVERAL SYNDICATES HAVE ALREADY BROKEN AWAY AND FORMED INDEPENDENT NON-COMMUNIST LABOR ORGANIZATION.

5. MILITARY ATTITUDES. THE ARMED FORCES ARE PREOCCUPIED WITH THREE ISSUES: (A) PRESERVATION OF NATIONAL UNITY, (B) CONTINUED SUPPRESSION OF THE PCE, AND (C) THE PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC ORDER. SILVA SAID THAT SPAIN'S HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE AND THE ARMED FORCES' TRADITION MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR FEDERAL SYSTEM TO SERVE AS MEANS OF DEALING WITH BASQUE AND CATALAN PROBLEMS.
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6. UNITY OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS. SILVA SAID SEVERAL MAJOR IDEOLOGICAL ISSUES SEPARATED THE UDE FROM THE "EQUIPO" OF FIVE OPPOSITION CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTIES. THE "EQUIPO" INSISTS ON A FEDERAL STRUCTURE AND, IN HIS TALKS WITH OTHER EUROPEAN CD LEADERS, SILVA WAS TOLD THAT THIS WAS THE "EQUIPO'S" PRECONDITION FOR UNITY. ANOTHER IS THE "EQUIPO,S" ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OF THE PCE WHICH THE UDE CANNOT

ACCEPT. ALL THE SAME, SILVA SAID THAT TALKS WERE CONTINUING WITH THE "EQUIPO". SILVA EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE DISILLUSIONMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS FOR THEIR RECOGNITION OF THE "EQUIPO" WHICH INCLUDES CD PARTIES WITH ONLY A HANDFUL OF MEMBERS; RUIZ GIMENEZ WAS FRANK ENOUGH TO ADMIT AT THE RECENT "EQUIPO" CONGRESS THAT HIS FOLLOWERS IN THE IDC TOTALED ABOUT 500.

7. UDE TO DECLARE ITSELF A POLITICAL PARTY. THE UDE, WHICH HAS OVER 36,000 MEMBERS, WOULD HOLD ITS FIRST NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FEB 27 IN MADRID. INVITED GUESTS WOULD BE PRESENT FROM THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTIES OF ITALY, THE FRG, AND BELGIUM. (SILVA SAID THAT HE HAD RECENTLY DISCUSSED CSU PARTICIPATION WITH STRAUS WHO HAS BEEN VACATIONING IN SPAIN.) THE UDE INTENDED TO DECLARE ITSELF A POLITICAL PARTY WITHOUT WAITING FOR THE GOVT TO REFORM THE LAWS REGULATING POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS.

8. OUTLOOK FOR PRESENT GOVT. ARIAS WAS LIKELY TO LEAVE BEFORE THE SUMMER; HE WAS NOT EXERCISING LEADERSHIP AND HAD LOST MUCH GROUND. SILVA QUIPPED THAT SPAIN HAD A UNIQUE POLITICAL CONFIGURATION: A MONARCH, A PRESIDENT, AND A PREMIER (FRAGA); THIS WAS TOO WELL KNOWN FOR ARIAS TO SURVIVE THE COMPARISON WITH FRAGA.

9. SENATOR PELL TBRD SILVA THAT THE U.S. SENATE WOULD SHORTLY TAKE UP THE RATIFICATION OF THE BILATERAL TREATY AND WOULD LOOK CAREFULLY INTO THE SCOPE OF POLITICAL CHANGES WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN SPAIN. SILVA SAID THAT THERE WOULD BE GENUINE DEMOCRATIC CHANGES AND THE U.S. WAS MAKING A "GOOD INVESTMENT" IN SPAIN AND EUROPE WITH THE NEW TREATY. STABLER

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